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Results of Online Poll: THA Election 2021: What Do The people Want?

Tobago CivilNET took the initiative to create an online poll to capture the Tobago public's sentiment regarding the unprecedented Deadlock resulting from the recent THA Election (6-PDP, 6-PNM). The poll was advertised on Facebook and required around 30 seconds to complete. Results are summarized below as of the date and time above. The poll has been closed.

Interpreting this poll

The aim of this poll is to get opinions of the public on this important issue. Though not a strict scientific poll, it points us in the direction of public sentiment and our hope is that it is used, along with other relevant data, by leaders to decide how to proceed in this deadlock and in key decisions in the future. The comments at the end are also very useful. We recommend that polls of the public be used in all major future decisions.

Poll Results

Total responses (from Wednesday 17 February to date and time above): **828**

Question: Are you a resident of Tobago?

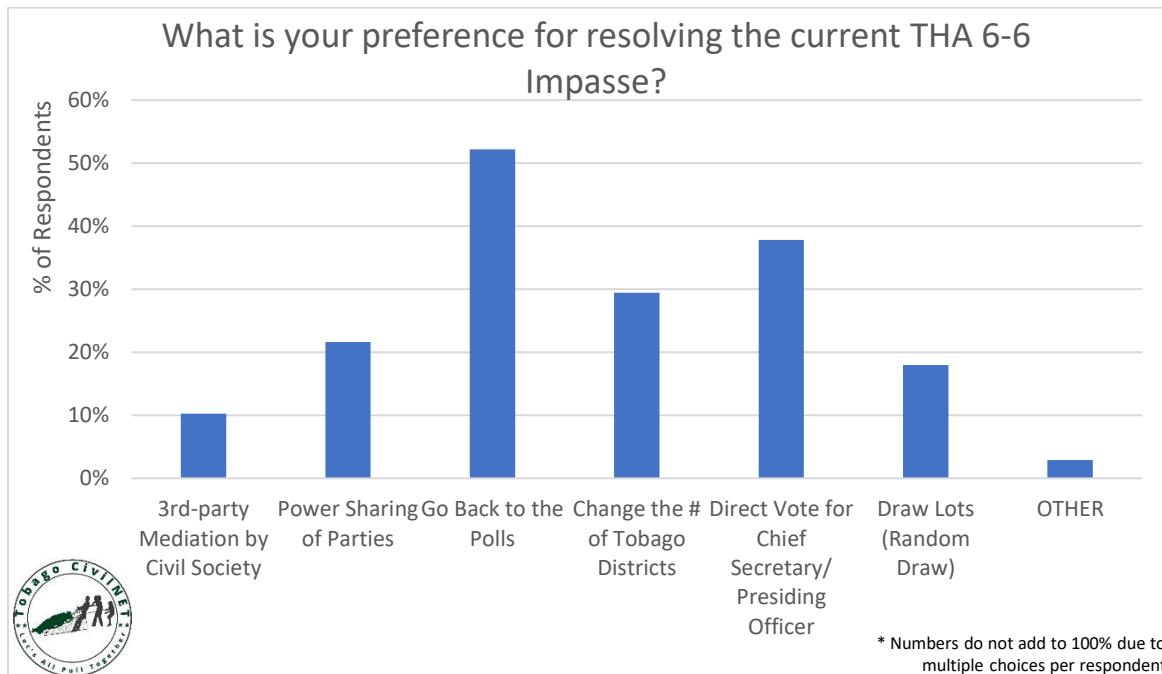
98.3% said yes, 1.7% said no.

Question: What is your preference for resolving the current THA 6-6 Impasse (select multiple options if desired)?

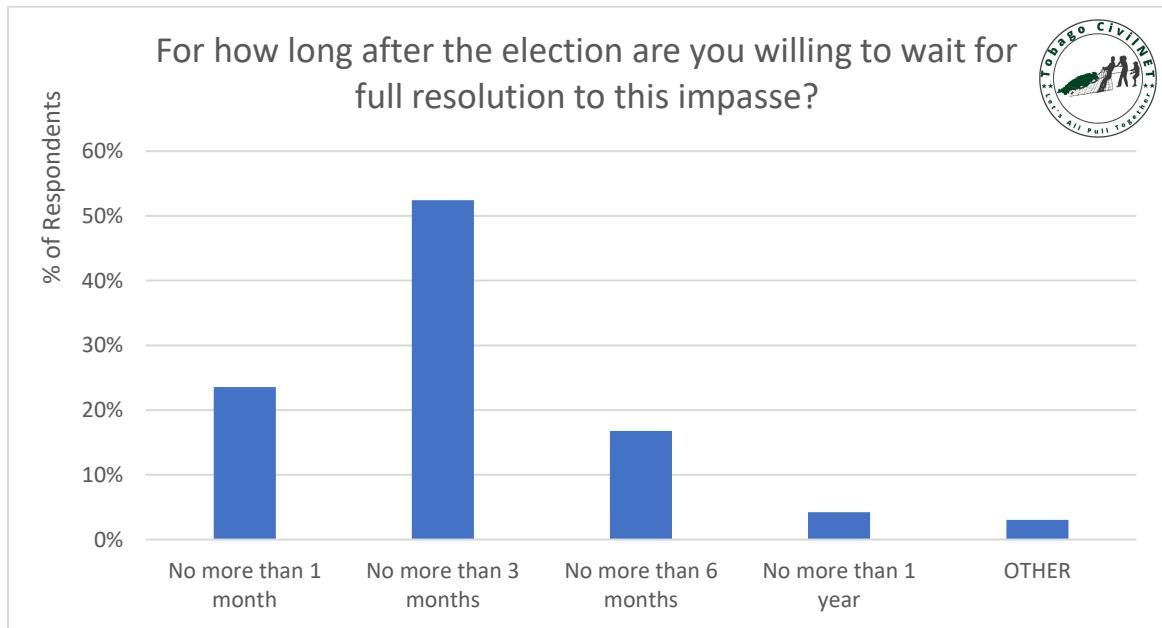
Options Provided:

- 3rd-party Mediation by Civil Society (e.g. Independent Elder's Council)
- Power sharing amongst the Parties
- Go back to the polls

Change the number of Tobago districts
 Change THA Act to allow direct voting for Chief Secretary/ Presiding Officer
 Draw lots (random draw)
 OTHER: _____



Question: For how long after the election are you willing to wait for full resolution to this impasse?



Question: Please add any additional comments about the way forward:

191 Comments were added. Selected comments have been included below verbatim. The comments are summarized in this word cloud (larger words were used more often):



Verbatim Comments from CivilNET Poll Respondents:

“I love the PNM. I’ll prefer that they be in power. However , Tracey needs to step down. Berkeley and the others too.”

“The Tobagonians have been very patient with this process. We look fwd to a solution soon”

“the leaders should behave maturely and share power. That's the mandate of the people.”

“No other measure can offer a permanent solution. It is important to prevent the issue from tearing the society apart.”

“I would love to see consultations between the two parties on a way forward. I am disappointed that they have failed to do so at this time. The parties can at least decide on a Presiding Officer and move forward from there.”

“The representatives should bear in mind that their sole objectives are for the people of Tobago”

“Both parties should have a conversation.”

“1 party cannot be making decisions at the moment. Decisions must be shared as they both have the same amount of seats.”

“direct and participatory democracy involving all sectors of the society in selecting candidates and empowering the people with real decision-making authority is the way to address the political and economic development of Tobago. ”

“The magnanimous party need to draw first blood, by throwing their full support behind the nominee of the opposing party, to vote for the Presiding Officer in the interest of Tobago. ”

“Let Tobago handle TOBAGO business”

“The Citizens of Trinidad and Tobaago voted for you to govern . Please have accountability and transparency”

“Nothing should be done by Cabinet until both parties are consulted”

“Political maturity amongst the leaders needs to happen sooner rather than later”

“I honestly believe that this is an opportunity for the powers that be to sit and communicate about the needs of Tobago. It is so unfortunate that this is where we are at. Time to start utilizing the skills of the skillful of the island to take us forward. Please come to a resolution and quickly”

“Tobago needs self governance”

“I will like to see my home Tobago do better in all areas especially since this covid has change the whole world even if it means both part working hand in hand just for the betterment of Tobago and just kill this power warfare because after all we all have to live here”

“Let's mediate our way toward. ”

“If the will of the people is being ignored, then the people should ignore the will of the ones who ignore them. Government work for people, people dont work for the government. ”

“A good juncture to anchor Tobago for self- governance. Please avoid starting off in partisan politics. ”

“Speedy resolve”

“Just get it done, so we could get on with Tobago business, especially now more than ever”

“Both party should come to some kind of agreement on the way forward”

“Immediate consultations with PDP and us as citizens i dont appreciate the disrespect from persons in parliament especially our prime minister”

“The people, that is the electorate, have already spoken by way of casting their votes. The mandate and responsibility now is for each ELECTED individual to represent their constituency and wider Tobago by

finding a way forward to administer the affairs of Tobago and its residents. This is a fantastic opportunity to display maturity and leadership. ”

“My preference is power sharing, but that is utopia in this political reality”

“Consideration should be given to use the popular vote as a tie breaker. ”

“I really don’t think either participating parties is interested in stepping aside for the other to rule or sharing power otherwise, we would have had a resolution..... ”

“The government should move swiftly to treat with Tobago’s demands, I.e full autonomy within the context of the unitary state of Trinidad and Tobago. As a people it’s time we determine our own destiny. Any further attempts to hinder us from achieving this (full autonomy) should be considered a manifestation of an unfriendly act towards the people of Tobago. ”

“Our political leaders need to be respectful toward office holders. I am ashamed at times how they address the President and Prime minister”

“It’s too late now for discussion with the disrespectful PM. He could rock so”

“Tobago need to get constitution reformation, also need to change the act of 1888 and 1889 from making Tobago a ward of Trinidad. Tobago was never a ward to no country and will never be. This system should be abolish. ”

“Politicians need to remember they work for the people, not the party. Those elected represent Tobago people, not their career. Shame on all of them for not putting the interest of the people first. ”

“People need to stop playing games with Tobago and do what’s best for Tobago first this 6:6 has proven that it’s all about self first not Tobago”

“Leave the 6:6 for now whilst the citizens vote for the chief secretary alone.

I believe that this 15 districts will be too rushed”

“Have a neutral presiding officer”

“Rise up Tobago. ”

“We fed up! We want change. PNM had us suffering for years and we want better for our future generation and current generation. ”

“Remove corrupt Politicians”

“All 12 elect should come together for the way forward”

“The Act must be adjusted & so too must the number of districts. Heading back the polls now would require too much effort on the part of an already frustrated public. ”

“If we draw lots, either outcome would be an improvement on the unfair situation with which we are living now. ”

“It is madness to increase districts. Better to reduce from 12 to 5”

“Although this rigmarole is unprecedeted, it is clear that the PNM is trying all in their power to remain in power, and that is expected. Who wants to lose anyways? They are gerrymandering and manipulating the democratic will of the people to benefit the party oppose to the island of Tobago and that is certainly unacceptable and intolerable. 1. There must to consultations with both parties and the people of Tobago by extension as it relates to the adding of seats. If one of the main objectives is to have an odd number, why 15 when 13 is the next odd number ? 2. Why not exercise the existing standing orders, all of which are used in the borough corporations, the THA and the National parliament. For the sole purpose of breaking the tie, the casting of lots isn't anything new and it is clear in the standing orders. Using the aforementioned to get over this first hurdle of electing a presiding officer will allow for the business of tobago to continue in a structural and constitutional way that fosters transparency. As it stands with this deadlock predicament there's little to no transparency with the previous executive council remaining in full effect with non-assemblyman managing a division. ”

“Option for holding an elected officer accountable for their actions whether they represented their electorate or not, time for a change in the way our monies are spent”

“THA act must be resolved for TOBAGO to be in CONTROL of ALL its borders #ALL. ”

“Tobago is a beautiful island with loads of resources and was never treated fairly. Residence should not be of poor classes if we are given opportunities like owning a piece of land and given a fair chance whether you are politically in favor of the party that is or sin't in power.. Alot of children would habe to leave this beautiful island because of unemployment and when they are finiahd school or universities they are no job opportunites for them on this island. TOURISM hmmm. Its damaged and NO ONE seems to be keen on bringing it back to the drawing board for it to be a revenue coming into the country. The government has to be more serious, buildings are not economic development. Its some form of providing our necessities. We need more annd im no longer settling for less... lets get serious. ”

“All each party want is power they don't care about the people”

“Pnm must give pdp a chance”

“Everyone should have been given a division to manage along with their constituency obviously and let the people judge them base on their performance, from the division to their constituency. I believe this would definitely have them trying to out perform each other, also more authority for both parties to monitor each other. ”

“Change the format of the THA Elections - candidates should be elected for SPECIFIC positions and NOT by electoral district. Tobago's development is be stagnated by Candidates who do not have the capacity to THINK”

“We need change in party, we are not getting enough work done on the island, is only close to every election work is done. The rest of the three and a half years Pnm hands tie like market crab, to me is only Pnm people are getting some assistance, the undecided and opposition people are totally ignored. Our very own dont care about us. Is d very Kamala who gave us a very good back pay as a public servant. Pnm never have but can do zipline and other things and poor people remain hunger and have no proper shelter. The way forward is to vote them out and let see if the other side can offer much need help to the lower class and middle class. ”

“We are currently in limbo please let the part resolve soon”

“The party with the most votes wins. ”

“Will they cheat again yes yes they will.smh great is how allur name”

“Let the people of Tobago decide their own way forward for the future. Find a way to let the voice of we TOBAGONIANS be heard without bias and prodigious”

“Tobago needs better and proper representation throughout the island. ”

“I think the both sides need to grow up and put Tobago first stop the pettiness and agree to disagree”

“Reject the amendment. Let the amendments be suggested from a functional House. ”

“Oppose Dr Rowley's scheme to increase constituencies to 15...This is Gerrymandering by him to pad any future election in the PNM favor. .

Dr Rowley must be aware from his Primary School arithmetic class that 15 is divisible two ways and as such we will be no further ahead. Plus the population is too small for that many.

Dr.Rowley must not be allowed to use this situation to put self and PNM interest ahead of Tobago's. There is really one issue at hand....how to prevent a tie in the future and that is easily solved by increasing the number to 13....so that we can return to the polls in the shortest time possible...

STOP DR. ROWLEY AT ALL COST”

“The prime minister should allow the Tobago assemble to manage our affairs and not intervene partially, be neutral. Give Tobago its own autonomy.we can manage our affairs”

“Country before party and personal political agenda. ”

“PNM got more vote Overall, they should have the Chief Secretary”